

Circ.: m. 24,117

Front Edit Other
Page Page Page

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Looking Back on Cuba

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When ~~Mr. Kennedy~~ says "Cuba" these days in the United States he may mean the ill-fated invasion attempt by northern-trained Cuban refugees which gave Fidel Castro something to crow about at his May Day rallies and gave the Kennedy administration a grim setback in international prestige.

Former President Eisenhower has set the tone for examination into that affair by saying, "Don't go back and rake over the ashes, but see what we can do better in the future." In that sense a review is in order.

From much that has appeared in public prints it seems that blame—not to try to narrow it down to individuals—can be placed on three factors:

One was the wide lack of unity and coherent organization among the Cuban refugees, whose common enmity to Castro is not enough to provide a constructive program. Disorganization made a farce of the security of information and let Castro know what to expect.

Second, the Central Intelligence Agency or some agency appears thus to have been drawn into the role of director or at least coordinator of plans which should have been the exclusive province of a Cuban provisional or exile government.

Third, under these circumstances the impression unfortunately was produced abroad that the United States had masterminded an attack on a Caribbean neighbor; whereas the highest authorities in the government avow that the decision to invade was made by Cuban leaders with only the assent of Ameri-

cans who had assisted in equipping and training them.

Back of this, of course, goes a question as to whether officials in Washington and in Florida should have given such paramilitary assistance, or even permitted refugees to use North American soil for recruiting and drilling counterrevolutionary forces.

Latin-American dictatorships being what they are, Latin-American countries long have honored a "right of asylum" which could include political activity. Communist dictatorships being what they are, it is difficult to find hope for reversal, even by a resistant people, without external assistance.

The point is that the leadership should come from those whose freedom is directly at stake—in this instance, Cubans. If the United States strictly limits its role to reasonable support, and is willing to await the issue on that basis, it has ground to hope at least that the world will understand.

But the point is that the United States should not make puppets of exile governments nor be drawn so deeply into their plans as to make them appear puppets. The statement attributed to Secretary of State Dean Rusk that the United States has no plan now "to proceed with any American armed intervention in Cuba" is indicative of a correct line.

If, through the Organization of American States, Castroism can be contained in Cuba—and it probably can—it will sow the seeds of its own downfall. Latin-Americans will then have the determining hand in what is primarily a Latin-American problem.